

Author: N. Wright
Date: Tuesday, November 17, 2009 10:46:26 AM GMT
Subject: RE: Response to Kevin

Kevin,

If you read my posting carefully you will see clearly that I did **not** claim that Al Qaeda was not created by Arabs: "It may well have been started by Arab Islamists, but its ownership is now far beyond one ethnic grouping, and this is one of things that makes it so difficult to deal with..."

I would also again caution against sweeping generalizations against the "Muslim World" thinking this or that, such as: "The second common denominator they share is opposition to the West due to the belief that Islam is being undermined by the westernization of their societies."

There are definitely elements in many Muslim societies and among the elites that govern them that believe this, some very influential and arguably with good cause. However it is a vast over-simplification as it ignores the specific situations within the countries, the different socio-economic, historical and cultural challenges they face, the development of nationalism, etc.

As analysts and scholars it behoves us to take a more sophisticated and nuanced view.

Nick

Hi Nick,

When I disagree with you, I have disappointedly noticed, you accuse me of over-simplification, sweeping generalizations, lack of sophistication and nuance, or, as last week, of cynicism and intellectual unfairness. Yet I more than anyone else have provided evidence to substantiate my analysis.

I am sure you would agree that undervaluing my intellectual abilities is not conducive to free academic debate and is also unfair given the time and effort I put into keeping the forums alive.

Agreeing to disagree is the basis on which to engage in academic debate, or any civilized debate for that matter, so let us agree to disagree. To this end, I once again invoke Karen Armstrong's wisdom on this subject. She wrote "*Dialogue must not degenerate into a cosy colloquy between like-minded people.*"

I would hope that you would treasure my ability to debate and my courage to dissent as assets to the pursuit of academic freedom and not as liabilities to the cosy colloquy of like-minded people in the course.

Kevin